

*WORK SESSION OF THE GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL held Wednesday, February 8, 2017, to discuss the Greenbelt Theater Electricity Billing Issue.*

*Mayor Jordan started the meeting at 8:00 p.m. The meeting was held in Room 201 of the Greenbelt Community Center.*

*PRESENT WERE: Councilmembers Judith F. Davis, Konrad E. Herling, Leta M. Mach, Silke I. Pope, Edward V.J. Putens, Rodney M. Roberts and Mayor Emmett V. Jordan.*

*STAFF PRESENT WERE: Nicole Ard, City Manager, and Shaniya Lashley-Mullen, Administrative Assistant.*

*ALSO PRESENT WERE: Dr. Caitlin McGrath, Kathy Jones and Tim Murray, Friends of Greenbelt Theatre; Tami Watkins, Pepco; Jim Giese, Greenbelt News Review; and Bill Orleans.*

*Mayor Jordan stated this meeting was to review the Pepco bills for the Greenbelt Theater and determine next steps to move forward in resolving this matter. Mayor Jordan also stated that Tami Watkins, Pepco, is a Greenbelt resident and has frequented the Greenbelt Theater.*

*Dr. McGrath stated that the Friends of Greenbelt Theatre (FOGT) began managing the theater about a year and half ago and placed the utilities in their name. When they didn't get a bill last year, they contacted Pepco. Pepco advised the bill was in the investigation department and they were advised to continue to pay the normal monthly amount until the matter was resolved.*

*Ms. Davis asked Dr. McGrath if there was a period of time where FOGT didn't make a payment to Pepco. Dr. McGrath stated FOGT continued to make the "good faith payment" each month on the account. Dr. McGrath added that the theater doesn't qualify for bulk rate.*

*In response to questions from Council, Ms. Ard said an inquiry had been made with the merchants association, yet the City had not been made aware of any center business experiencing an increase in their Pepco rates.*

*Ms. Ard said that she, along with Dr. McGrath and Mr. Jim Sterling, had a meeting with Pepco representatives earlier today to discuss the outstanding bill balance.*

*Ms. Ard stated that Mr. Sterling and two Pepco representatives were going to do a theater site visit tomorrow to be sure that upgraded equipment and infrastructure were being used solely for the theater and were charged correctly.*

*Ms. Watkins reviewed theater billing information from June 2015 to present. She stated that due to the new system, she would need more time to get the five year bill history. Ms. Watkins added that the meeting they had this morning was a positive one and Pepco takes full responsibility for the mistake. She said they want to work to address any questions that the City has and work on a resolution.*

*Council advised that Pepco still hasn't answered their questions regarding who decides the rate code each business is assigned and why the theater receives an energy charge when they are energy efficient.*

*Mr. Roberts asked why Pepco couldn't advise before the heavy up how many amps the theater was using. Ms. Watkins stated that before the heavy up, Pepco couldn't determine usage due to the age of the equipment. After the heavy up, she said the theater went from using 800 amps to 1600 amps.*

*Council suggested that the bill be appealed again to the Public Service Commission because they have new information. They also suggested staff contact an outside energy consultant and have legal counsel look into the matter.*

*Ms. Ard presented several options to pay the outstanding bill balance and current bill. Ms. Ard advised that the options were presented to facilitate discussion among Council Members were flexible and could be combined or modified. Council consensus was wait until after the site survey to discuss the options.*

*Mr. Herling advised the Prince George's County Arts and Humanities Council is having a meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and would like to partner with the Greenbelt Theater.*

*Mayor Jordan asked about partnering with Pepco in the future. Ms. Watkins stated that Council can request a sponsorship but Pepco cannot commit to a capital campaign. Ms. Ard asked Dr. McGrath to share potential opportunities to address the outstanding billing through partnership. Dr. McGrath suggested Pepco show support with a 30 second commercial at the theater, similar to other businesses.*

*Mr. Murray asked and was provided answers to several questions.*

*Mr. Orleans asked and was provided answers to several questions.*

#### *Informational Items*

*Several informational items were discussed.*

*The meeting ended at 9:56 p.m.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Shaniya Lashley-Mullen  
Administrative Assistant*